

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 SS-15 SP-02 SAA-01 H-01
INR-10 INRE-00 PM-05 NSCE-00 DODE-00 CIAE-00
OMB-01 SSO-00 /060 W
-----043192 151141Z /15 S

O R 151028Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8719
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 3961

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: UN, IS, LE, MARR, PEPR
SUBJECT: REMARKS OF UNIFIL POLITICAL ADVISOR ON SOUTH LEBANON

REF: BEIRUT 3735

1. JEAN-CLAUDE AIME, UNIFIL'S POLITICAL ADVISOR, CALLED
ON DCM JULY 14. AIME SAID THE FOLLOWING.

2. ON JULY 13, FIGHTERS FROM ABU ABBAS' PALESTINIAN
LIBERATION FRONT (PLF) CAPTURED AND HELD FOR SEVERAL
HOURS 51 UNIFIL SOLDIERS, ALL OF WHOM WERE SEIZED JUST
SOUTH OF TYRE. THE UNIFIL SOLDIERS WERE RELEASED AFTER
FATAH INTERVENED WITH THE PLF ON UNIFIL'S BEHALF.

3. PRESS REPORTS NOTWITHSTANDING, THE PLF HAD CAPTURED
THE SOLDIERS PRIMARILY TO EMBARRASS FATAH FOR ITS COOPERATION
WITH UNIFIL. (AIME COMMENTED THAT FATAH HAD EVEN PROMISED
THAT IT WOULD FIGHT ON UNIFIL'S SIDE IF THERE WERE AN ARMED
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CONFRONTATION WITH THE REJECTIONISTS.) FATAH ARRESTED
14 MEMBERS OF THE PLF WHO HAD BEEN INVOLVED IN THE JULY
13 INCIDENT. (FYI. ACCORDING TO VARIOUS SOURCES,
FATAH AND THE PLF ENGAGED IN A DAY-LONG GUN-BATTLE IN
AL BUSS REFUGEE CAMP NEAR TYRE ON JULY 14. END FYI)

4. AIME SAID THAT UN MIDDLE EAST COMMANDER ENSIO

SIILASVUO HAD TOLD THE GOL THAT THEY SHOULD NOT DEPLOY LAF UNITS SOUTH. AIME, HOWEVER, THOUGHT THE ARMY SHOULD SEND UNITS SOUTH, PROVIDED THE UNITS DID NOT TRY TO ENTER THE ZONE THE CHRISTIAN MILITIA NOW CONTROLLED. INSTEAD, THE LEBANESE ARMY UNITS SHOULD WORK WITH UNIFIL IN THE SECURITY BELT NORTH OF THE ZONE CONTROLLED BY THE CHRISTIANS. AIME BELIEVED THE ISRAELIS WOULD VIEW AS VERY THREATENING ANY PROPOSED ENTRY OF THE LEBANESE ARMY INTO THE BORDER ZONE AND MIGHT INTERPRET SUCH A MOVE AS SIGNALING AN INTENTION TO CLOSE THE "GOOD FENCE." IN THIS CASE, AIME SAID, THE ISRAELIS MIGHT WELL INTERVENE DIRECTLY ON THE GROUND. AIME ALSO NOTED THAT THE PRESENCE OF LEBANESE ARMY UNITS IN THE BORDER ZONE COULD BE VERY EMBARRASSING TO THE GOL IF THE GOOD FENCE WERE NOT CLOSED, SINCE THIS WOULD MEAN THE LEBANESE ARMY WAS TOLERATING FREE PASSAGE BETWEEN ISRAEL AND LEBANON.

5. AIME DID NOT THINK THE ISRAELIS WOULD INTERVENE IN SOUTH LEBANON MERELY BECAUSE PRESIDENT SARKIS RESIGNED. THEY WERE PRIMARILY INTERESTED IN PROTECTING THE "GOOD FENCE" AND THE CHRISTIAN MILITIAS THERE AND WOULD PROBABLY STAY OUT UNLESS THE "GOOD FENCE" AND MILITIAS WERE DIRECTLY THREATENED.

6. AIME SAID THAT SECRETARY-GENERAL WALDHEIM WOULD BE ARRIVING DAMASCUS JULY 17 AND LEAVING MORNING JULY 18.
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HE SAID GOL HAD REQUESTED THAT WALDHEIM ALSO COME TO LEBANON BUT THAT HE (AIME) AND OTHER UN OFFICIALS HAD ADVISED WALDHEIM AGAINST VISITING LEBANON, BECAUSE THEY SAW NO PURPOSE IN SUCH A TRIP AT THIS TIME.
PARKER

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